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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/611,165	07/06/2000	John C. Calhoun JR.	5044:84	5604

7590 05/19/2004

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EXAMINER

FRENEL, VANEL

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3626

DATE MAILED: 05/19/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/611,165

Applicant(s)

CALHOUN ET AL.

Examiner

Vanel Frenel

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MLW

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 24 February 2004.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____. 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Notice to Applicant

1. This communication is in response to the Amendment filed 02/24/04. Claims 1-20 are pending.
2. The rejection of the Office Action filed on 02/24/04 is maintained.

Response to Arguments

3. Applicant's arguments filed 02/24/04 regarding claims 1-20 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Applicant's arguments will be addressed hereinbelow in order in which they appear in the response filed 02/24/04.

(A) At pages 5-8 of the 02/24/04 response, Applicant's argues the followings:

(1) The 35 U.S.C. 101 rejection for claims 1-11.

(2) Rieker, Warady and Myers do not teach a master account table including account setup information for at least one of utilization and login actions for said web-based managed care transaction system, or a member account table including identity information for at least one member.

(3) There is no motivation or suggestion to combine the references of Rieker, Warady, Myers and Bessette.

(B) Regarding the requirement under 35 U.S.C. § 101 that a claimed invention be limited to the technological arts in order to be deemed statutory and in response to Applicant's arguments found on pages 5-7, the Examiner submits that the phrase "technological arts" has been created and used by the courts to offer another view of the

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term “useful arts.” See *In re Musgrave*, 167 USPQ (BNA) 280 (CCPA 1970). Hence, the first test of whether an invention is eligible for a patent is to determine if the invention is within the “technological arts.”

Further, despite the express language of §101, several judicially created exceptions have been established to exclude certain subject matter as being patentable subject matter covered by §101. These exceptions include “laws of nature,” “natural phenomena,” and “abstract ideas.” See *Diamond v. Diehr*, 450, U.S. 175, 185, 209 USPQ (BNA) 1, 7 (1981). However, courts have found that even if an invention incorporates abstract ideas, such as mathematical algorithms, the invention may nevertheless be statutory subject matter if the invention as a whole produces a “useful, concrete and tangible result.” See *State Street Bank & Trust Co. v. Signature Financial Group, Inc.* 149 F.3d 1368, 1973, 47 USPQ2d (BNA) 1596 (Fed. Cir. 1998). This addresses the second test under 35 U.S.C § 101 of whether or not an invention is eligible for a patent. The Manual of Patent Examining Procedure reiterates this point. More specifically, MPEP § 2106(II)(A) states, “The claimed invention as a whole must accomplish a practical application. That is, it must produce a ‘useful, concrete and tangible result.’ *State Street*, 149 F.3d at 1373, 47 USPQ2d at 1601-02.” Furthermore, “Only when the claim is devoid of any limitation to a practical application in the technological arts should it be rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101.” (MPEP § 2106(II)(A))

This “two prong” test was evident when the Court of Customs and Patent Appeals (CCPA) decided an appeal from the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences (BPAI). See *In re Toma*, 197 USPQ (BNA) 852 (CCPA 1978). In *Toma*, the court held

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that the recited mathematical algorithm did not render the claim as a whole non-statutory using the Freeman-Walter-Abele test as applied to *Gottschalk v. Benson*, 409 U.S. 63, 175 USPQ (BNA) 673 (1972). Additionally, the court decided separately on the issue of the “technological arts.” The court developed a “technological arts” analysis: The “technological” or “useful” arts inquiry must focus on whether the claimed subject matter...is statutory, not on whether the product of the claimed subject matter...is statutory, not on whether the prior art which the claimed subject matter purports to replace...is statutory, and not on whether the claimed subject matter is presently perceived to be an improvement over the prior art, e.g., whether it “enhances” the operation of a machine. *In re Toma* at 857.

In *Toma*, the claimed invention was a computer program for translating a source human language (e.g., Russian) into a target human language (e.g., English). The court found that the claimed computer implemented process was within the “technological art” because the claimed invention was an operation being performed by a computer within a computer.

The decision in *State Street Bank & Trust Co. v. Signature Financial Group, Inc.* never addressed this prong of the test. In *State Street Bank & Trust Co.*, the court found that the “mathematical exception” using the Freeman-Walter-Abele test has little, if any, application to determining the presence of statutory subject matter but rather, statutory subject matter should be based on whether the operation produces a “useful, concrete and tangible result.” See *State Street Bank & Trust Co.* at 1374. Furthermore, the court found that there was no “business method exception” since the court decisions

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that purported to create such exceptions were based on novelty or lack of enablement issues and not on statutory grounds. Therefore, the court held that “[w]hether the patent's claims are too broad to be patentable is not to be judged under §101, but rather under §§102, 103 and 112.” See *State Street Bank & Trust Co.* at 1377. Both of these analyses go towards whether the claimed invention is non-statutory because of the presence of an abstract idea. *State Street* never addressed the first part of the analysis, i.e., the “technological arts” test established in *Toma* because the invention in *State Street* (i.e., a computerized system for determining the year-end income, expense, and capital gain or loss for the portfolio) **was already determined to be within the technological arts** under the *Toma* test. This dichotomy has been recently acknowledged by the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences in affirming a §101 rejection finding the claimed invention to be non-statutory for failing the technological arts test. See *Ex parte Bowman*, 61 USPQ2d (BNA) 1669 (BdPatApp&Int 2001).

What is indeed important to note in the *Bowman* decision is that the Board acknowledged the dichotomy of the analysis of the claims under 35 U.S.C. § 101, thereby emphasizing the fact that not only must the claimed invention produce a “useful, concrete and tangible result,” **but that it must also be limited to the technological arts** in order to be deemed statutory under the guidelines of 35 U.S.C. § 101.

(C) With respect to Applicant's second argument, Myers teaches an account table which allows user or member to secure his/her account by login/ authenticate for purpose of accessing a credit card as a means of information to identify the user (col. 8,

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Lines 28-40). In this present case, the account table is accessed to determine who can access information. This is especially important in computer- based applications regardless of whether the application is in a managed care environment or load testing environment. Such a feature is desired by computer-based applications and therefore, the Examiner's use of this teaching in Myers can be combined with the teachings of the Reicker and Warady combination. Therefore, Applicant's argument is not persuasive.

(D) Examiner respectfully suggests that obviousness is not determined on the basis of the evidence as a whole and the relative persuasiveness of the arguments. See *In re Oetiker*, 977F. 2d 1443, 1445, 24 USPQ2d 1443, 1444 (Fed. Cir. 1992); *In re Hedges*, 783F.2d 1038, 1039, 228 USPQ 685, 686 (Fed. Cir.1992); *In re Piaseckii*, 745 F.2d 1468, 1472, 223 USPQ 785, 788 (Fed. Cir.1984); *In re Rinehart*, 531 F.2d 1048, 1052, 189 USPQ 143, 147 (CCPA 1976). Using this standard, the Examiner respectfully submits that he has at least satisfied the burden of presenting a prima facie case of obviousness, since he has presented evidence of corresponding claim elements in the prior art and has expressly articulated the combinations and the motivations for combinations that fairly suggest Applicant's claimed invention (See paper number 5). Note, for example, in the instant case, the Examiner respectfully notes that each and every motivation to combine the applied references are accompanied by select portions of the respective reference(s) which specially support that particular motivation and /or an explanation based on the logic and scientific reasoning of one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention that support a holding of obviousness. As such, it is not

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seen that the Examiner's combination of references is unsupported by the applied prior art of record. Rather, it is respectfully submitted that explanation based on the logic and scientific reasoning of one of ordinary skilled in the art at the time of the invention that support a holding of obviousness has been adequately provided by the motivations and reasons indicated by the Examiner, *Ex parte Levengood*, 28 USPQ2d 1300(Bd. Pat. App. & Inter., 4/22/93). Therefore, the combination of references is proper and the rejection is maintained.

In addition, the Examiner recognizes that references cannot be arbitrarily altered or modified and that there must be some reason why one skilled in the art would be motivated to make the proposed modifications. However, although the Examiner agrees that the motivation or suggestion to make modifications must be articulated, it is respectfully contended that there is no requirement that the motivation to make modifications must be expressly articulated within the references themselves.

References are evaluated by what they suggest to one versed in the art, rather than by their specific disclosures, *In re Bozek*, 163 USPQ 545 (CCPA 1969). Therefore, Applicant's argument is not persuasive.

The Examiner notes that Applicant's arguments directed to the Riecker, Warady, Bessette and Myers combination is that there is no motivation to combine the network testing system of Myers with the healthcare systems of Reicker and Warady. The Examiner has previously explained his rationale for combining the teachings of Myers within Reicker and Warady in paragraph 3(C) above and Applicant's arguments are nonpersuasive for the same reasons.

4. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Conclusion

5. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. The cited but not applied art teaches system for web-based payroll and benefits administration (6,401,079), distributed access management of information resources (6,182,142) and system and method for improving efficiency of health care (US 2002/0077849).

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Vanel Frenel whose telephone number is 703-305-4952. The examiner can normally be reached on 6:30am-5:00pm.

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Joseph Thomas can be reached on 703-305-9588. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-305-7687 for regular communications and 703-305-7687 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-1113.

V.F
V.F
April 10, 2004

*Alexander K. K. K. K. K.
Alexander K. K. K. K. K.
Primary Examiner
AU 3626*